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ABSTRACT

Presented in another of the staff training monograph series from the University of Texas at Austin is information on planning, purchasing and serving snacks to young children. Nutritional and developmental aspects in planning snacks are reviewed, and factors in shopping for food and selecting equipment are discussed. Sample menus are provided for settings with and without kitchen facilities. (CL)

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

Program for Staff Training of Exemplary Early Childhood Centers

for Handicapped Children

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P R E S E N T S

THE STAFF TRAINING MONOGRAPH SERIES

SNACKS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

by

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BULLETIN ON SNACKS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

Sound nutritional practices are essential in every program for young children. Food gives pleasure and provides the basic nutrients for good health and development. In addition, food and nutrition provide unique opportunities for learning experiences for children and offer lines of communication through which parental involvement in the program can be initiated and strengthened.

This booklet presents material concerning snacks that may be served to young children. The organization of the booklet is as follows:

1. Factors to consider in planning snacks for young children
2. Guides for purchasing food for snacks
3. Selection of serving equipment and utensils
4. Serving snacks
5. Sample menus
6. Food selection chart
7. Evaluation form
8. Suggested references

FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN PLANNING SNACKS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

1. One selection from each of the three groups below each day gives a nutritionally balanced snack.
   a) meat, fish, poultry, milk or cheese
   b) fruit or vegetable
   c) bread product
2. Vary the colors, textures and shapes of the foods within each menu.
3. Take advantage of foods in season to save on food costs.
4. If kitchen facilities are not available, a toaster, electric skillet, hot plate and ice chest will allow greater variety in foods selected to serve.
5. Consider preparation time and staff availability.
6. Young children prefer food at room temperature.
7. Consider the age of the children and amounts of food they can be expected to eat.
8. Have food prepared in finger-sized pieces for easy handling, while still retaining the identifying characteristics of each food served. It is best to serve small amounts and have the child request seconds than to have the child confronted with adult size servings he cannot eat. Children take great pleasure when they can "eat it all" and ask for more. Some examples of child size servings include:

   juice or milk - glass ½ full

   bread slices or sandwiches - regular slice of bread quartered

   toast strips - one slice of bread cut lengthwise into three strips

   carrots, celery, cheese strips - small lengthwise strips approximately 3" x ½"

meat (liver, tongue, beef strips)

apples, oranges, bananas - quartered. For younger children, oranges and apples may be cut into eighths. Depending on the ability of the child, oranges and bananas may or may not be peeled.

other foods - 1 Tsp - 1 T average serving

9. Accidents and spills are normal and should be treated with as little fuss as possible. It is a good idea to keep a pan of water and/or a damp sponge available to wipe up spills. The child often likes to assist in cleaning up the juice or milk.

10. Children have better appetites when they are not fatigued or over-stimulated. If snack follows an active period of play, the teacher could plan a transition period such as rest, stories or quiet music activities.

11. Introduce foods which might be new to children one at a time and along with familiar foods. The child's first response to a new food may be to explore the food with his senses. He may smell, touch, and manipulate the food before tasting it. Insisting that a child eat the new food the first time it is served may develop more unfavorable attitudes than favorable ones.

12. Family eating patterns and the cultural background of the children should be considered. Not all children enjoy the same foods. Food likes and dislikes may be related to family likes and dislikes and to past experiences with food. It is normal for children to prefer some foods over other foods. A wise teacher accepts these likes and dislikes and avoids insisting that the child eat everything served for snacks.

13. Perhaps the most important factor in creating a relaxed atmosphere is the attitude of the teacher. If the teacher enjoys new foods and is able to relax and share in the conversation and activities of snack time, children will respond in the same manner.

14. Utilize snack time to enhance learning through experiences with food (preparation of food; sensory pleasure; concept development such as color, size, measuring; motor coordination; language).

15. Special occasions (e.g., picnics, holidays) offer opportunities for serving surprise foods.

16. Keep records which may assist in future planning. These might include:

    a) foods which are managed easily by the children

    b) food likes and dislikes of individual children

    c) combinations of food that are especially good and those that are rejected by many

    d) other reactions to food served

    e) a suggested form for evaluating snacks (see page 15)

PURCHASING FOOD FOR SNACKS

1. Purchase staple commodities in as large quantities as storage space will allow. Wholesale buying may be possible. This will save time and money.
2. Take advantage of sales and foods in season.
3. Decide on how often purchasing of food will be necessary and desirable. This depends on storage space, keeping quality of food, delivery dates. For example, staple foods such as canned foods, crackers, peanut butter, and jelly may be purchased once a month; perishables may be bought once a week or daily.
4. Make out market orders based on:
   a) food on hand
   b) menus for the week
   c) recipes being used
   d) number of children and adults to be served
5. Utilize comparative shopping. Food may be purchased in several forms; for example, fresh, canned, dried, frozen, packaged. The form selected will be determined by such factors as cost, ease of preparation, time and equipment needed, storage facilities, and quality and use of food. For instance, dried milk may be preferred for cooking while whole milk may be preferred for drinking.
6. Keep records on foods purchased and consumed and adjust purchases to eliminate waste.

SELECTION OF SERVING EQUIPMENT AND UTENSILS

Equipment and utensils should be suited to the child's size and his ability to feed himself.

Chairs and tables should be low enough so the child can sit comfortably with his feet touching the floor and arms resting on the table.

Glasses or paper cups for juice should be small enough to permit the child to hold with one hand. The 4 oz. glass or cup is satisfactory. The base of the glass should sit firmly on the table to help eliminate spills. Children can drink better from glasses with straight sides. If glasses are used, select a material which is non-breakable and dishwasher-proof.

Utensils. Forks and spoons should be child size. Most children under three, developmentally, prefer a spoon. The spoon can be either a small teaspoon or a child's spoon with a wide shallow bowl and handle which is easy to grasp. A short handled fork can be introduced as the child progresses.

Plates or bowls. Most snacks can be served on napkins without the use of plates or bowls. To reduce food costs, napkins can be cut in half before they are used. Some foods (custard, ice cream, beans, pudding, soup) will require bowls or paper cups for service. If bowls are used, select ones with rounded edges and fairly straight sides.

Pitchers. Children enjoy pouring "seconds" of juice. Non-breakable cream sized pitchers are easy for the child to manage. The pitcher should be well-balanced to prevent tip overs and should have a spout to direct the flow of the liquid. It would be desirable for the spout to be partially covered to control the amount of liquid to be poured at one time.

Coverings. Some children who are beginning to feed themselves may require aprons. Suggested fabrics which require little care include terry cloth, perma press, plastic and water proof crib sheetings.

SERVING SNACKS

How to serve the snack is dependent on the number of adults, types of facilities, and the abilities of the children. A valuable learning experience for children is to assist, according to their capabilities, in such things as wiping off tables and putting out napkins and juice glasses. They can also assist in putting away their napkins and glasses when finished.

One adult at a table with 4-5 children permits the adult to attend to the needs of each child and helps eliminate some problems which may develop due to the child's limited ability to feed himself. In some situations, even smaller groups may be necessary.

Snacks may be served from trays or food carts prepared in the kitchen prior to serving. The snack materials are brought into the room and the adults and/or children serve from the tray or cart. When finished the snack materials are returned to the kitchen.

Sometimes snacks are prepared in the classroom. Some foods children can assist in preparing include:

sandwiches	cookies	churned butter
jello	fruit juice popsicles	
carrot [illegible]ips	baked bread	
stew	ice cream	
nachos	scrambled eggs	

SAMPLE MENU

The nutritionally balanced menus on the following pages may be used as shown or similar combinations may be chosen from the Food Selection Chart (see page 13). Some foods which might ordinarily be prepared on the premises if many were being served, could be purchased as prepared foods, such as cookies, cakes, canned chicken cut into cubes, tuna chunks, lunch meat, muffins, and so forth.

SAMPLE MENUS - 2 ITEMS PER DAY
NO KITCHEN FACILITIES REQUIRED

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Saltines Apple juice	Lunch meat Tomato juice	Peanut butter sandwiches Chocolate milk

THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Orange sections Milk	Carrot strips Orange juice

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Hi Ho crackers with peanut butter Apple juice	Graham crackers Egg nog	Canned chicken cut in chunks Orange juice

THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Apple slices and butter sandwiches Milk	Cheese strips Pineapple juice

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MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Celery strips Tomato juice	Cheese spread on bread Pineapple juice	Instant Vanilla pudding Milk

THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Apple slices Milk	Spam slices Orange juice

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Hi Ho crackers Orange juice	Cheese cubes Milk	Carrot strips Apple juice

THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Tuna fish chunks Pineapple juice	Chocolate ice cream Milk

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Graham crackers Pineapple juice	Meat spread on bread Milk	Lettuce pieces Orange juice

THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Cheese and crackers Milk	Raisins Apple juice

SAMPLE MENUS - 3 ITEMS PER DAY
KITCHEN FACILITIES MAY BE REQUIRED

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Peanut butter on bread Raisins Pineapple juice	Orange quarters Hi Ho crackers Milk	Pound cake Carrot strips Milk

THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Toast sticks Cheese strips Apple juice	Hard cooked egg halves Saltines Orange juice

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MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Tortillas Lettuce pieces or other greens Milk	Hamburger patties Bread and butter Tomato juice	Carrot strips Toast sticks Milk

THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Apple slices Graham crackers Chocolate milk	Fish sticks Hi Ho crackers Pineapple juice

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MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Cheese strips Saltines Tomato juice	Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches Lettuce pieces Milk	Liver strips Toast sticks Orange juice

THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Orange sections Cornbread sticks Milk	Banana halves Graham crackers Milk

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MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Butter and honey on bread Celery strips Pineapple juice	Apple slices Oatmeal cookies Milk	Chicken Rice soup Carrot strips Saltines

THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Hard cooked eggs Toast sticks Tomato juice	Cream cheese on crackers Raisins Apple juice

SAMPLE MENUS - 3 ITEMS PER DAY
KITCHEN FACILITIES MAY BE REQUIRED

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Cream cheese on on bread Raisins Tomato juice	Apple slices Graham crackers Milk	Frankfurter chunks Toast sticks Pineapple juice

THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Carrot strip. Nachos Milk	Apple sauce Hi Ho crackers Milk

FOOD SELECTION CHART

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY/CHILD	MARKET ORDER FOR 10 CHILDREN AND 2 ADULTS
Meats			
Liver strips	Fresh	2 strips	1/4 lb.
Hamburger patties	Fresh	2 sm. round	1 lb.
Fish sticks (in quarters)	Frozen (heat & serve)	2 quarters	1 pkg.
Tongue cubes	Fresh	3-4 cubes	1 sm. tongue
Chicken chunks	Canned or fresh	3-4 chunks	1 can
Frankfurters (in quarters)	Packaged	2-3 quarters	1 pkg.
Lunch meat slices	Packaged (prepared)	1/4-1/2 slice	1-2 pkgs.
Tuna	Canned (prepared)	1-2 Tablespoons	2-3 7 oz. cans
Tamales	Prepared or homemade	1/2-1	6-14
Enchiladas	Prepared or homemade	1/2-1	6-14
Spam slices	Canned (prepared)	1/4-1/2 slice	1 can
Meat spreads	Canned (prepared)	1-2 tsp.	4-6 oz.
Meat substitutes			
Cheese strips	Mild	3 strips	1/4-1/2 lb.
Hard cooked egg halves	Fresh	1 half	1/2 doz.
Cheese spreads	Prepared	1-2 tsp.	4-6 oz.
Beans	Packaged	1-2 Tablespoons	
Fruit			
Seedless green grapes	Fresh	5-6	2-3 lbs.
Banana halves	Fresh	1 half	6
Orange sections	Fresh	1-2	4-6
Apple slices	Fresh	1/4 apple	3-4
Raisins	Packaged	2 Tablespoons	1 box
Applesauce	Canned	2-3 Tablespoons	2-3 303 cans
Pineapple chunks	Canned or Fresh	3-4 chunks	"
Pear slices	Fresh or Canned	1/4 (sm. slices)	"
Dried fruit	Packaged	2-3 pieces	1-2 packages
Cantaloupe chunks	Fresh	3-4 chunks	1 small
Canned fruit	Canned	2 Tablespoons	2-3 cans
Vegetables			
Carrot strips 3"x 1/4"	Fresh	3 strips	4-5
Celery strips	Fresh	3 strips	2-3 sticks
Lettuce pieces	Fresh	2-3 pieces	1 head
Spinach pieces	Fresh	2-3 pieces	1 sm. bunch
Or other greens (poke, turnip)	Fresh	2-3 pieces	1 bunch
Other raw vegetables (parsnips)	Fresh	2-3 pieces	
Beverages			
Grape juice	Canned	1/4-1/2 c	1 46 oz. can
Apple juice	"	"	"
Tomato juice	"	"	"
Pineapple juice	"	"	"
Orange juice	"	"	"
Orange-Pineapple juice	"	"	"
Cherry juice	"	"	"
Cranberry juice	"	"	"
Lemonade	"	"	"
Milk	Fresh	"	1/2 gallon
Chocolate milk	Fresh	"	"
Egg nog	Fresh	"	"

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY/CHILD	MARKET ORDER FOR 10 CHILDREN AND 2 ADULTS
Breads			
Sandwiches - may be served as open face sandwich quarters (1 slice bread cut into quarters) or as a regular sandwich divided into quarters			
Peanut butter	whole wheat thin sliced	1-2 quarters	7-8 slices or 14-16 slices
Peanut butter & jelly	"	"	"
Butter on bread	"	"	"
Butter and lettuce	"	"	"
Butter & honey on bread	"	"	"
Applebutter	"	"	"
Apple slices & butter	"	"	"
Shredded carrots	"	"	"
Cream cheese	"	"	"
Cheese spreads	"	"	"
Meat spreads	"	"	"
Lunch meat	"	"	"
Muffins			
Cornbread, bran, blueberry, etc.	Prepared, mix or homemade	1-2 halves	12-14
Gingerbread	Mix or homemade	1-2 2" squares	1 ready mix pkg.
Sweet rolls	Prepared	1/2 roll	12-14 rolls
Tortillas			
Tortillas with butter	Prepared	1-2	6-12
Nachos	Prepared	1-2	6-12
Toast-(strips are made from one slice bread cut into thirds)			
Toast strips with butter	Whole wheat thin slices	2-3 strips	8-9 slices
Toast strips with peanut butter	"	"	"
Toast strips with cream cheese	"	"	"
Crackers			
Hi Ho crackers		2-3	24-36
Crackers & cream cheese		"	24-36
Crackers & peanut butter		"	24-36
Graham crackers (or with butter or peanut butter)		"	24-36
Saltines and butter		"	24-36
Miscellaneous			
Apple Tapioca	Ready to cook	2-3 Tablespoons	2 sm. boxes
Jello with fruit	Packaged	"	"
Jello without fruit	Packaged	"	"
Custard	Ready to cook	"	"
Soups: Chicken & rice, Tomato, Chicken noodle, etc.	Canned	1/4 cup	2 cans
Storebought cookies		1-2	2 1/2 doz.
Storebought doughnuts	Cut in sm. pieces	2-3 pieces	1/2 doz.
Puddings	Instant	2-3 Tablespoons	2 sm. boxes
Ice Cream	Prepared	2-3 Tablespoons	1 qt.
Pound Cake	Prepared	1/2 slice	1 cake

SNACK EVALUATION FORM

Menu	Date Used	Remarks	Children's reactions and comments

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